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24 April 1961

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN



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DAILY BRIEF

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*France: (Information as of 0430 EST) French military insurgent control has been extended to most of Algeria and government fears that the insurrection will spread to metropolitan France have increased. [A relatively small insurgent force could seize the centers of power in Paris and there is doubt that regular security and police forces in France could be relied on for active opposition to French army units.] The government's claim on 23 April that a paratroop attack on Paris from Algeria was imminent and its arming of some civilian volunteer defenders were probably intended primarily to galvanize public sentiment against the insurrection and demonstrate to the army De Gaulle's widespread popular backing. Nevertheless, an early army move against Paris remains possible

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Congo: In the follow-up constitutional talks which are scheduled to begin today at Coquilhatville in Equateur Province, President Kasavubu and Congolese factions represented in the Leopoldville government appear determined to press Tshombé to agree to a tighter federal structure for the Congo than envisaged at Tananarive. [Tshombé's personal position has weakened significantly since the March conference, and he is also under increasing pressure from Brussels to adopt a less provocative attitude toward the UN.] Representatives of the Stanleyville regime are not expected to attend the Coquilhatville talks.

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DAILY BRIEF

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French Military Revolt Spreads

25X1 [All regular communications with Algeria were out 22-23 April, but a member of Debré's personal staff admitted on 23 April that only two enclaves near Oran--an army base at Tlemcen and the large naval base at Mers-el-kebir--remain outside insurgent control. Admiral Querville, French naval commander in the Mediterranean, is reported to be in sympathy with the insurgent leaders, but he is not thought to have turned the Mers-el-kebir base over to them. The list of units which the insurgents claim as actively adhering to the revolt total about a quarter of total army strength in Algeria and appears to include practically all the units which have been engaged in active operations.]

Several key military personnel in Algeria including the Air Force Commander General Bigot have apparently joined the revolt. Army General Jean-Marie Gouraud, the Constantine Army Corps commander, is quoted by Algiers radio as having turned all units under his command over to the insurgents. General Andre Petit, deputy Saharan commander, is reported openly participating on the side of the insurgents. Some of the colonels who participated in previous extremist activity against the government slipped back to Algeria in time to join the rising. General Salan, the only one of the four coup leaders not in Algeria when it was first launched, has reportedly reached Algiers from Spain.

25X1 There is at present no specific evidence of political involvement in the insurrection. [] Challe and the other military leaders claim that they want only to force De Gaulle to modify his Algerian policy but, if forced to depose him, would install a government composed of rightist political figures. Most often mentioned for high government posts are former Gaullist Jacques Soustelle, ex-Premier Georges Bidault, and several rightist Socialist leaders who favor French retention of Algeria. The military reportedly would limit themselves to a few key cabinet posts.]

25X1 [] In France, a number of high ranking officers are reported in sympathy with the insurgents, but at present none has openly identified himself with Algiers. Both General Olie, the Chief of Staff for National Defense and Louis Joxe, Minister for Algerian Affairs, have reportedly urged De Gaulle to move

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cautiously against the revolt as a result of their brief visit to Algeria. De Gaulle, however, appears determined to maintain his uncompromising stand against the insurgent leaders and the government has reportedly started planning a blockade of Algeria. [REDACTED]

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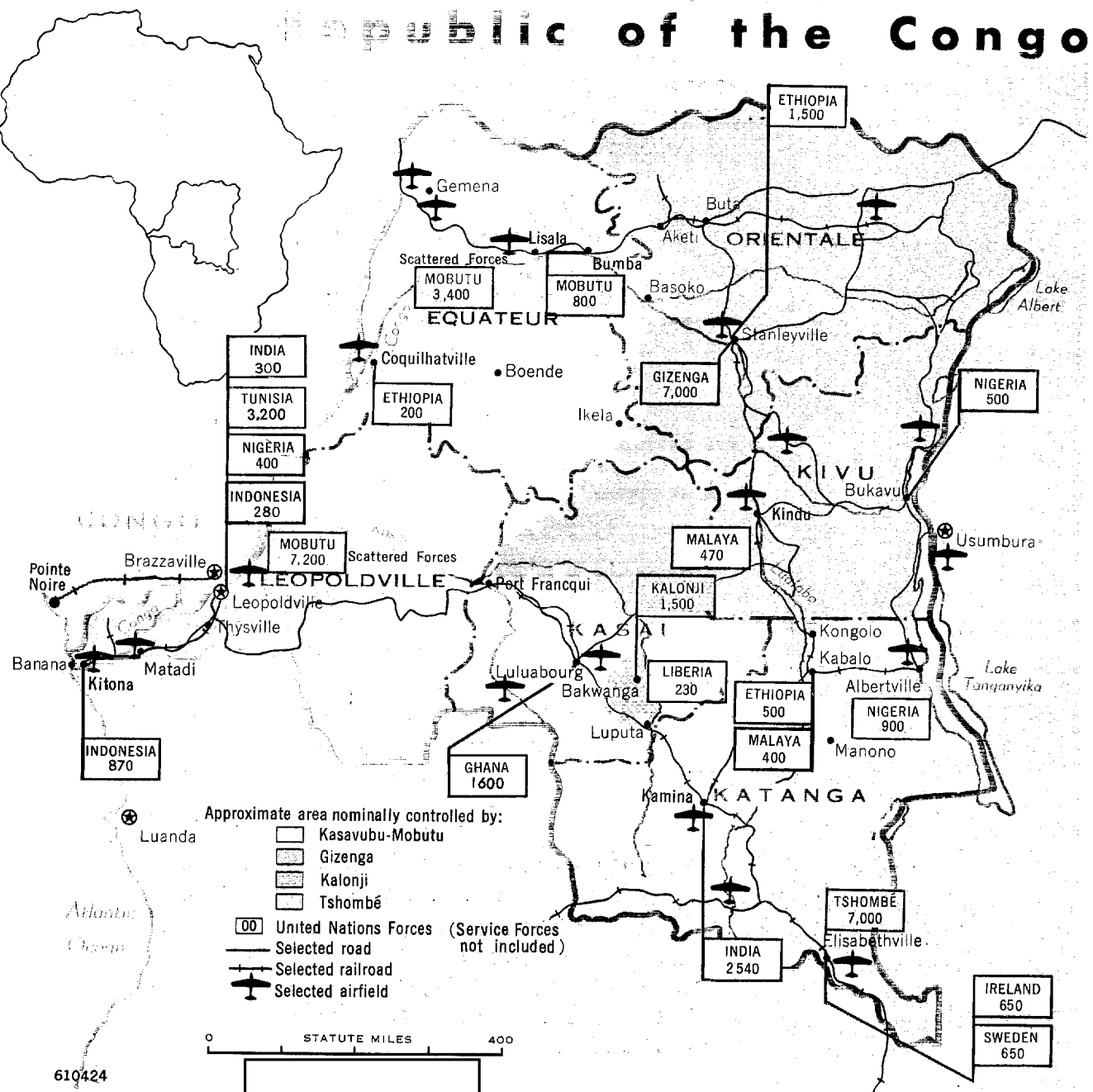
Immediate concern in Paris, however, has focused on the possibility of a paratroop invasion from Algeria, where there is probably sufficient air transport for this purpose. [REDACTED]

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It was probably to guard against such a rapid takeover, as well as for psychological reasons, that the Ministry of Interior announced the issuing of arms to civilian volunteers. The volunteers were urged to ready themselves for action against a paratroop attack. Representatives of nearly all major parties rallied to the government although Interior officials reportedly tried to limit arms distribution to known members of the Gaullist Union for the New Republic. The apparent success of these first attempts by De Gaulle to consolidate his vast but amorphous public support probably more than offsets the risks inherent in the creation of a "citizen's army."

Meanwhile communist leaders have issued calls to other leftist groups urging unity of action in demonstrations against the insurrection. The free trade unions have thus far, however, been reluctant to do more than make similar, but separate, strike calls. A one-hour stoppage throughout France has been called by the major unions for 11 EST today. [REDACTED]

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Situation in the Congo

{Katanga's President Tshombé is showing increasing anxiety over the official Belgian attitude toward his regime as the new government of the Social Christian (Catholic) and Socialist parties prepares to take over in Brussels, probably this week. Long unhappy over Belgium's failure to give him unqualified backing, he now apparently fears that Brussels is moving toward closer support of the Leopoldville government at Katanga's expense.}

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[redacted] Tshombé [redacted] would be greatly disturbed by Belgium's resumption of full diplomatic relations with the central government. Discussions on this matter now are in an advanced stage and, according to the Belgian counselor in Washington, will probably bear fruit before mid-June. Tshombé in effect accused Brussels of planning to "stab him in the back" and threatened to follow the advice of anti-Belgian members of his regime, some of whom reportedly are pressing for the replacement of Belgian advisers with French nationals.}

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[redacted] the new government headed by Prime Minister Lefevre would attempt to nudge Tshombé toward closer alignment with Leopoldville while supporting long-term policies designed to enable the central government ultimately to exercise its authority over Katanga. At the same time, Brussels will try to avoid precipitating Tshombé's downfall since Belgian officials are convinced that chaos and disorder would result. Early measures being contemplated include withdrawal of certain key Belgian advisers and the appointment of a more energetic consul general in Elisabethville.}

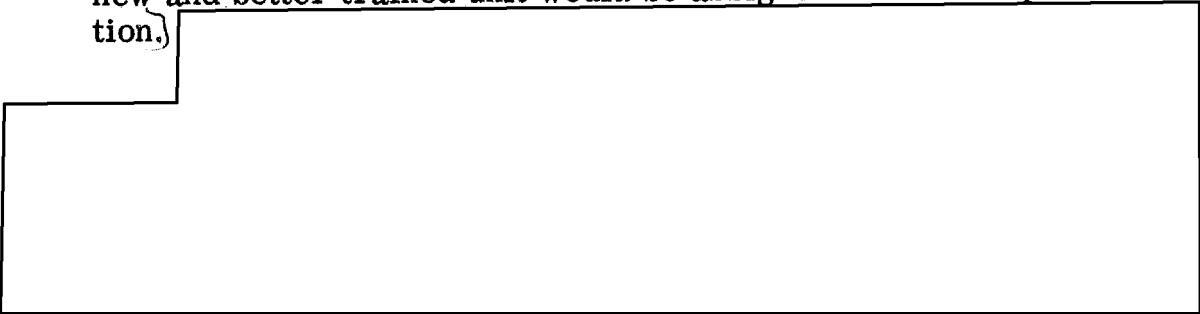
{Paul Henri Spaak, who is expected to be the new Belgian foreign minister, has already indicated he intends to exercise tighter control over Belgian activities in the Congo by absorbing the Ministry of African Affairs into the Foreign Ministry. He }

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{reportedly also hopes to force Belgian firms with holdings in the Congo to cooperate in channeling all Belgian aid and financial support through the central government in Leopoldville.)

{Meanwhile, the Sudanese UN contingent, originally totaling 394 men, has returned to Khartoum. The withdrawal was ordered early last month after Sudanese troops were forced out of Matadi by Mobutu's elements of the Congolese Army. However, the Sudan, while critical of the UN's handling of the Matadi incident, continues to support the over-all UN effort in the Congo. Sudanese officials have indicated that after a suitable period a new and better trained unit would be assigned to the UN operation.)



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